A few ***initial considerations.*** This is essentially Pharaoh versus God. In Egypt, Pharaoh was their god. This is the battle between ***god and God*** put on display. Second, the plagues get ***progressively worse*** but as they do, the protection of God gets more and more prevalent until finally they are ***immune to death.*** I just want you to recognize that for a moment because that is just like **it has been, is now, and will be.** As the days get darker and darker, we as the people of God have ***unbelievably heightened protection.*** What do I mean? We have the sword of the Spirit like no other generation before us. The Word of God (which is the greatest protection for us in these last days) is ***understandable completely by anyone in our time who will go after it.*** It has never been like this before. Finally, the flies plague…some translations say *“gnats.”* I was thinking, **plague**…what if God sent a plague of MATTs! HA! That would DRIVE PHARAOH CRAZY! HA!!

Exodus Chapter 9 Verse 1

* Notice this just briefly…God says to Pharaoh, *“Let My people go that* ***they may serve Me.”*** I want you to see something here…***these people belong to God.*** **They are His.** Just like you, just like me, even the folks out there that are unsaved…that are *cruel*, that are *hard on you* or *folks you think are beneath you*…***they belong to the Lord.*** Just because they haven’t come to Him doesn’t mean they’re not His…***they’re just lost. He still loves them.***
* And God’s command is to *let them go that they may serve Him.* Not let them go that they may serve Pharaoh or themselves or anything or anyone else…let them go for His sake. We, you and I…if we’re honest and if we truly seek to serve God, ***you and I ought to revere and respect, and default/FIGHT to kindness with everyone.*** Not because they are worthy of it…not because we want to…but because they belong to the Lord. We ought to let folks go…how they’ve offended, how they rub you wrong…***release them***…they belong to the Lord.
* Imagine a world where people are ***kind.*** I was thinking about this just coming to work today…what a day to look forward to…how much more would I ***love*** to go to work, ***love*** to go to church, ***love*** to go to King Soopers, if everyone was kind? That gives you a glimpse of the **impact** your attitude towards others really does have. God says, *I know they’re an idiot…I know they do everything wrong…I know they don’t listen and I know they are going to come up on terribly hard times*…let them go…serve Me in how you treat them.
* I want you to know this…***this shouldn’t be a mystery to the follower of God***…disrespectful, unkind, and unhelpful thoughts and comments, rifts between you and another person that you are contributing to or the origination point, do you know **why** that happens? ***No, not because they stink….because you’re in the flesh.*** Don’t harden your heart. I want you to remember that ***the opposite of a hard heart is an obedient heart***…and God has said, commanded, *love the Lord and love others…*

Exodus Chapter 9 Verses 2 – 7

* Now that’s interesting! Pharaoh *actually* **checks in on God!** We haven’t seen this before. *Is it as God said?* What an excellent precept! Who would have thought we’d get a good spiritual lesson from Pharaoh! **HA!** God has given His Word and as life plays out, he examines the circumstance against God’s Word and here is the truth you will find time and time again…***God is absolutely faithful!*** For the Christian, this is a bit of a *celebration*…we are strengthened in our faith when we see this and man if you’re in His Word, searching the scriptures daily, ***you will see this daily!*** But for Pharaoh…so odd and hard to understand…it has the opposite effect.
* Not sure I get that at all! How can you, if you have heard the Word of God, understood the Word of God…how can you even after seeing God completely on point with His Word…choose somehow to deny…I’m going to call it…*reality?!* I don’t get it BUT I do see it all the time. In the lives of Christians going down a destructive path so contrary to the heart and Word of God…and then the regret and loss sets in…but you ***know*** the Word of God? I don’t get it…

Exodus Chapter 9 Verses 8 – 12

* The plagues coming upon Pharaoh and Egypt are getting ***progressively worse.*** I just want to point that out. First the Nile turning to blood. Then Frogs, then lice, then flies/gnats, then the prosperity of the land…but now, the issue is ***human*** and it is ***grievous.*** And this plague is a different kind of wake-up call…it’s a warning, a type of what is to come if Pharaoh does not come to his senses. The Hebrew word for *“boil”* speaks of a burning and truly the lives of the people are endangered…
* It’s *a warning, a message, a foreshadowing* from God…a glimpse of what is ahead…**intense suffering**…if a different path is not taken…***He does the same thing still today.*** God give us eyes to see Your merciful warnings and turn back to You!!! Only three plagues remain until there is total loss…
* I have missed many signs in my life but ***I am determined not to miss anymore***… Drugs, in a way, **ruined** me… It is impossible for me to live in a *sustained state of happiness/being “ok,”* I go through minutes, days and hours where I am great, feel great, very content with life…but then when the people go away and the event ends…I begin to battle with ***dis-rest***, being ***not okay*** on the inside…I’m not sure if I’m explaining effectively. Getting high, living high for so many years has completely messed me up…and I know that. It’s ok. It’s my own fault. And God sustains me.
* He taught me, showed me why I’m this way…and He has given me **great truths and tools** to help me in those times and days where truly me and life have our issues. I remember getting into drugs…I remember things that happened to *warn* me, things people said, the way I could see this already in the people around me that introduced me to drugs who had been getting high for years…***but I didn’t listen***…I went right in and created my own loss…I know that. Fully aware and its fully my fault. And I’m not in the business of doing that anymore…I welcome God’s warnings and I **love** to respond to them now.

Exodus Chapter 9 Verses 13 – 21

* This word for *“feared,*” it’s the idea of being reverent. Respectful, trustful, ***if they believed…they took action.*** And here’s the thing…bring the servants inside for the night…?! Bring the livestock inside the barns for the night!? **BIG DEAL!** It’s not a HUGE THING! Why didn’t ***everyone*** do it JUST IN CASE!?? It’s amazing! There is such a *rebellious stubborn prideful* spirit in the heart of man.
* Anytime you do not obey your mother, your father (if you’re a young person or young adult), anytime you do not obey your supervisors or your superiors…anytime you do not do what the Lord has commanded of you…that proves this rebellious nature and I want you to know exactly why you rebel…***you are in the flesh.***
* This action is so simple. It’s not complicated, it’s not hard…just like *respect your parents or love your neighbor*…those things are simple. Serve your wife, respect your husband. Each and every one of us can **write a paper** on that tonight. I am convinced of that! And yet the simple, non-complicated things, the simple non-complicated Word of God goes unheeded because Christians choose to walk in the flesh and the result is destruction.

Exodus Chapter 9 Verses 22 – 27

* It’s not genuine. It’s not real. There is no realization and no confession of plagues one through 6…each time *Pharaoh hardening his heart towards God. Pharaoh going back on his word.* Just this, this time? **This is not genuine.** Truly, if it was, there would be a total brokenness…, *“What have I become?”* He was not grieved at the sin…he was grieved at the consequences! Without that…there will be no real change…no regeneration. ***There is no need to be born again when you’ve only done one thing wrong!*** You and I must get to the place where we realize we are totally lost to sin without God…then we call out with the power of saving faith and its then God heals us!

Exodus Chapter 9 Verses 28 – 35

* ***A hardened heart is the result of disobedience.*** And the fruit of disobedience is blindness to the love and power of God. A deaf ear to His Word and voice…these are all the **payments** of disobedience. What a tragic payment plan to be on…